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Testimony to the Committee on Transportation

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Many towns are experiencing both heavier traffic and a shortage of police officers. Drivers know it. They know the chances of getting a ticket are slim, and the result has been a noticeable disregard for traffic laws.

More traffic and less enforcement mean more crashes. Red-light violations cause deadly right-angle wrecks. Speeding causes some accidents—when drivers go too fast to stop or stay in their lane--and adds to the severity of others.

Two bills would let technology save lives by improving driver behavior. **SB #149, AAC Installation of Red Light Cameras by Municipalities**, would let towns install cameras to snap pictures of red-light runners and mail them town-ordinance tickets, to be paid or contested as parking tickets are. The state and the town would split the fines.

SB #150, AAC Installation of Speed-Detecting Cameras on Highways would allow automated speed-enforcement devices on state roads to measure a violator's speed, photograph the car and the tag number. An officer would review the image and mail a ticket. Automated enforcement has reduced crashes and improved safety in other states and in many other countries. It's time for us to try it.

Connecticut's drunk-driving are tough. They tough to understand, tough to enforce, and tough to prosecute. They are an obstacle course of procedural requirements to be negotiated by police officers, often in the dead of night or at a messy crash. Omission of any of these requirements can prevent a prosecution or scuttle an administrative license suspension.

A task force begun by former Lt. Governor Sullivan after 2007 session and sustained by Rep. Reynolds in 2008-09 has proposed several bills to address the defects in current law. They benefit public safety, and we support them.

SB 152, AA Prohibiting Open Alcoholic Beverage Containers will bring the state in line with federal standards. We already prohibit driving under the influence and drinking while driving. This bill will further separate the acts of drinking and driving, with some common-sense exceptions. **SB 1054** is similar.

Per se procedures were intended to be a simple means, separate from the criminal process, to suspend the driving privileges of DUIs. **SB 153, AAC Administrative Per Se Procedures**, will require reasonable notice be given to an officer called to testify.

HB 6601 AAC Administrative Per Se Program, goes further, and trims some needless complexity from a convoluted system. It includes many improvements, including:

- Allow electronically transmitted police reports and signatures;
- Allow an arresting officer to certify probable cause to arrest;
- Eliminate the determination of probable cause from the issues to be determined at a DMV hearing.

We appreciate the concern for officer safety expressed in **SB 155, AA Requiring Training in Work Zone Safety**, but we oppose it in its present form. We believe that the Police Officer Standards and Training Council can and should determine the type and amount of training needed by police, and we oppose bills which mandate specified hours of training on particular subjects